ARKANSAS POULTRY FEDERATION

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September 8, 1997

Mr. Ken Neal, Editor
Tulsa World
318 Main Mall
Tulsa, OK 74013

Dear Ken,

Thank you for meeting with us today to discuss the poultry industry in Oklahoma and its impact on the environment.

The Arkansas Poultry Federation is a strong advocate of protecting the environment while maintaining the economic viability of local agricultural operations. We do this by supporting the use of Best Management Practices that can be incorporated in the Farm Management Plans of our producers. These practices and plans have proven to be effective in reducing the impact of poultry operations on the environment, especially through the reduction of nitrogen and phosphorus into the streams and waters of Oklahoma and Arkansas.

Included in this binder is information that may be useful in your understanding and coverage of the poultry industry. In addition, we are available to your staff and reporters for interviews and follow-up information about the poultry industry.

Please feel free to call us.

Sincerely,

Don Allen

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT TSN-48

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Information About the Impact of the Poultry Industry on Water Quality in Oklahoma and Arkansas

- **Farm Management Plans (FMPs) help protect the environment.**
  The purpose of FMPs is to control the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus from poultry wastes that may enter streams and watersheds. These plans are individually prepared for specific farms by using the best management practices (BMPs) developed by federal and state agencies and the poultry industry. The plans include soil testing, timing of the application of litter, using buffer zones, limiting phosphorus and avoiding litter applications on slopes greater than 15 degrees. Each FMP is jointly developed by the farmer and a water quality technician with the local county Conservation District. These districts are affiliated with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

- **The Muddy Fork HUA Water Quality Project showed significant reductions in Total Nitrogen as a result of the implementation of best management practices (BMPs).**
  The objectives of this project (initially called the Moore's Creek Water Quality Project) were to reduce nutrient, bacterial and sediment transport to ground and surface water supplies while maintaining the economic viability of local agricultural operations through the implementation of BMPs. Since 1990, nearly 250 farm conservation plans have been completed within the project area. Monitoring sites along Moore's Creek and Beaty Creek showed concentrations of Total Nitrogen decreased by 50-75% from 1991-1994 and continued to decrease by 50 to 73% during 1995 and 1996. A summary of the report is attached. *Source: The Muddy Fork HUA - A Water Success Story. University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, Fayetteville, Arkansas.*

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- **A review of stream data collected by the Arkansas Department of Pollution Control and Ecology shows declining levels of phosphorus in the principle tributaries of the Illinois River in Arkansas.**
  We believe this decline can be attributed primarily to the application of best management practices associated with the poultry industry. The data shows large reductions in concentration and loading of phosphorus since the 1980's. The initial time period was 1980-1990 and the second period was 1990-1994. During these two time periods there was a 17% reduction of phosphorus in the Illinois River, a 48% reduction in Sager Creek, a 22% reduction in the Baron Fork and a 14% reduction in Flint Creek. This was accomplished during a time when the poultry industry was expanding in the same area.

- **The poultry industry aggressively promotes FMPs with its growers.**
  Records from the Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission show that 3,373 nutrient management plans and 3,168 waste management plans have been filed in Benton and Washington counties during the past five years. Poultry companies strongly recommend FMPs to their growers.

- **The phosphorus problems with lakes and streams include sources other than the poultry industry.**
  Statistical information about Benton County, Arkansas, compiled by the Arkansas Agricultural Statistics Service, and livestock phosphorus data, compiled by the National Resources Conservation Service, estimate the following phosphorus contributions from various agricultural activities:

> Poultry (broilers/turkeys)	73%
> Cattle	23%
> Swine	2%
> Fertilizer	2%

These numbers are especially significant when combined with the knowledge that Benton County has the highest poultry population in Arkansas. The point is that one can not just look at poultry operations when evaluating environmental impact and assume it is the non-source problem. *Source: Arkansas Agricultural Statistics Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service*

- **Best management practices for handling dry poultry litter are used.**
  These guidelines, which contain specific phosphorus-based recommendations, were jointly developed by the Arkansas Poultry Federation, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Arkansas Department of Pollution Control and Ecology, Arkansas Extension Service and Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Service. *Source: Manure Management Planning For Water Quality, Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission.*

- **Poultry litter is a valuable, natural soil amendment.**
  It can add nutrients and organic matter to increase soil fertility and allows farmers to maintain a higher level of forage and pasture productivity than could be afforded with commercial fertilizer. Properly managed and handled, poultry litter is not a pollutant. *Source: Dry Poultry Manure Management, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Arkansas.*

- **The Lake Eucha report does not conclude that the water quality of the lake is degraded.**
  The study does state that the lake is threatened by excessive nutrient loading which has resulted in eutrophication, but does not provide a specific breakdown of phosphorus from point and non-point sources. The study makes assumptions without presenting any supporting data that the phosphorus loading in the Beaty Creek watershed is due to the large number of poultry produced. Even though the report does not document a cause and effect relationship between poultry operations and in-stream impacts, the industry agrees that the implementation of best management practices into a farm management plan can reduce the level of nutrient loading. *Source: Diagnostic and Feasibility Study of Lake Eucha, Oklahoma, Oklahoma Conservation Commission.*

- **The swine industry in Eastern Oklahoma increased by 283 percent between 1985 and 1995.** *Source: Oklahoma Agricultural Statistics Service*
  The Diagnostic and Feasibility Study of Lake Eucha seems to play down in its calculations the contributions of phosphorus from sources other than poultry.